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ABSTRACT

Providing information to help develop students' sense of narrative and to show them specific test-taking strategies, this publication is helpful to teachers as they ready their students for the North Carolina Fourth Grade Writing Assessment. The publication provides materials on generating ideas for writing, selecting topics, revising, developing children's concept of story, as well as test-taking strategies and information about test scoring. The first part of the publication discusses effective writing instruction and the writing process. The second part discusses narratives and concept of story. The third part addresses preparation for the North Carolina Writing Assessment. A 192-item list of authors and titles of children's books (arranged by topic) and a 39-item professional bibliography on writing are attached. (RS)

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grades 3-5

Teaching Narrative: Write on

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north carolina department of public instruction
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FOREWORD

It is hoped that this publication will be helpful to teachers as they ready their students for the North Carolina Fourth Grade Writing Assessment. It is designed to provide information to help develop students' sense of narrative and to show them specific test-taking strategies.

The best preparation for the test is to provide students a balanced writing program on a daily basis. Specific preparation for the North Carolina Writing Test involves a few test-taking strategies and should not consume a major part of instructional time throughout the year.

The development of a sense of narrative begins long before children come to school and is built upon in the early grades. This publication provides materials on generating ideas for writing, selecting topics, revising, developing children's concept of story, as well as test-taking strategies and information about test scoring.

We support your efforts to help children be successful and experience satisfaction as writers.

Table of Contents

Foreword 1

Introduction 3

Part I Effective Writing Instruction and the Writing Process 5
- Characteristics of an Effective Writing Program 6
- Functions of Spoken and Written Language 8
- The Writing Process 9
  - Generating Ideas for Writing 14
  - Selecting Topics for Writing 16
  - The Helping Circle 21
  - Revision, Evaluation and Editing 25

Part II Narratives and Concept of Story 33
- What Is A Narrative? 34
- Developing Children's Concept of Story 36
- Story Maps 37
- Ideas for Developing Sense of Narrative and for Creating Narratives 55
- Using Memories as Sources of Narratives 58
- Response Journals 61

Part III Preparation for the North Carolina Writing Assessment 65
- Student Preparation: Writing 66
- Summary of Criteria for Narrative 67
- Holistic Scoring 68
- Differences Between Personal and Imaginative Narrative Writing 71
- Student Preparation: Test Taking Strategies 72
- Cautions and Sample Prompts 74

Children's Literature Bibliography 85

Professional Bibliography 91

Introduction

WRITING IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Children must be successful and experience satisfaction as writers if they are to want to write, continue to write, and get better at writing. We all know that as adults we enjoy and do those things we do well. Children are no different but are even more fragile in their need for success.

1. In order to write, children must have something to write about. Children do have much to write about, e.g., a soccer game or birthday presents, and we can help them recognize that such aspects of daily living are interesting content for writing. In addition, the experiences teachers provide give purpose and context for writing—observing the classroom gerbil or reporting a survey, or special events such as a visit by a favorite author or a trip to the zoo.

2. Writing occurs best when children have real reasons to write. Writing a letter to the town council or the newspaper about a local problem fosters this real need to write.

3. Writing is a risk-taking operation. Children's trust that their writing will be accepted and valued is a prerequisite to their continuing willingness to put their thoughts, feelings, and ideas on paper.

4. Especially for children not fluent or confident in writing, the writing task can be tedious because two facets of composition must be accomplished simultaneously: not only must the writer decide what to write, but also must accomplish the potentially tiresome task of getting it down on paper. Two things to do at once can be one too many for some children. Talk before writing can ease the demands of the composing aspect of writing. Such talk can take the form of large or small group discussions, an individual conference between teacher and child, or several children working together.

In order to be successful, children need to:

- **write about something they know.**
- **write for real reasons important to them.**
- **trust that their ideas will be accepted and valued.**
- **talk before writing.**

Special thanks to the teachers and consultants in the Technical Assistance Centers who have been instrumental in the pareparation of this document.

PART I

Effective Writing Instruction and the Writing Process

This section is intended to describe some of the characteristics of an effective writing program for students in third, fourth, and fifth grades. The writing process is described in general terms with guides that may be used with students. Specific pages contain suggestions for dealing with particular aspects of the writing process such as topic selection, conferencing, and revision. This section is not intended to be inclusive. References that deal with the writing process in depth are included in the bibliography at the end of the text.

Characteristics of an Effective Writing Program

Grades 3-5

Teachers

- **write to and for children, with children, and encourage writing by children.**
  Teachers write personal notes in student journals, leave notes on the chalkboard to the class, or write stories for children to read. Teachers model writing by planning and writing as the students plan and write, setting the stage for good writing attitudes and habits.

- **know the attitudes, interests, and background of students.**
  In order for teachers to facilitate student writing, they must use their understanding of the children. The more the teachers know about their students as individuals, the better they are able to guide them in generating topics for writing or further study.

- **focus instruction on effective writing strategies.**
  Research shows that one of the most effective ways of teaching writing is for teachers to model all aspects of the writing process.

- **assess continually.**
  Writing is an on-going process and needs to be assessed in the same manner.

- **share samples of their own writing in process and in final form.**
  Teachers share their own writing with students and use think-alouds to show how they address different parts of the process. In this way teachers model the questions and habits of writers.

Students

- **need daily opportunities to write.**
  Daily writing is used for practice and for specific purposes, not formal assessment. Children need opportunities to write in all content areas and for a variety of reasons which might include recording events, invitations, letters, giving directions, personal notes, imaginative stories, and summaries. Writing enables students to learn new information and to clarify their own thinking.

- **need daily opportunities to share writing.**
  Sharing their writing with others including principals, parents, custodians, cafeteria workers, other students and teachers, and other community members helps students realize their ideas are valued and helps them write for different audiences.

- **need opportunities to select writing topics.**
  Students need to choose topics to write about that mean something to them as well as those prompts which the teacher might supply. ***Teachers find it beneficial to write about the topic prior to assigning it to students for writing.***

- **need opportunities to participate in appropriate prewriting activities.**
  ***Much** talking is required. This activity may take as much time as the actual writing, for it is equally important. This may include generating lists from brainstorming, retelling familiar stories, sharing experiences, gathering information, and telling the story orally prior to the writing. Time spent in prewriting will strengthen the rest of the process and insure a more satisfactory final product.*

- **need opportunities to clarify the writing assignment as to purpose, audience, and format.**
  Children should have the opportunity to write to a variety of audiences—themselves, teachers, older adults, and peers. This will help them learn different ways to address these different audiences.

- **need opportunities to experiment with language.**
  Writers must be exposed to writing fiction, non-fiction, science fiction, realistic fiction, fantasy, mythology, legends, fables, folk tales, mystery, short stories, sports, romance, prose, poetry, biography, and autobiography. They grow when they participate in choral readings, dramatic interpretation, public speaking, and reader's theater. They respond to opportunities to develop their oral language and to make connections between their reading and writing.

- **need time allotted for multiple drafts.**
  Time needs to be allotted for drafting both in class and at home. This is an essential part of the writing process. Not everything written is ready for publishing the first time. This is a time for taking risks without fear of judgment and a time for revising first attempts. This is the time to pour out words on paper to catch the idea and refine the ideas.

- **need writing as an extension activity for literature study.**
  As an extension of literature, writing should include shared writing, collaborative (group) writing, and other activities so that students can compare and contrast characters, interpret stories, draw inferences, make story maps, and write plot summaries rather than responding to short answer worksheets. Students need to be given a choice as to how they respond to the piece of literature.

- **need collaborative writing experiences.**
  Students learn different forms of writing, how to address different audiences, and how to think through the writing process by working with others. Having the opportunity to plan and write with others develops students' confidence in their writing ability.

- **need opportunities to write for authentic purposes and real audiences.**
  Students learn to write for each of the functions of written language. *(See page 8.)*

- **need writing folders and/or portfolios.**
  Examples of student writing should be selected by the teacher and the child to document progress.

Note: ***Students and adults need to write for many different purposes.*** *Teachers need to be aware of the various ways students use language and encourage them to write for each of the reasons as appropriate.* ***The following chart can be a useful guide in planning classroom instruction.***

FUNCTIONS OF SPOKEN AND WRITTEN LANGUAGE*

INSTRUMENTAL (Language to communicate basic needs)	-sign up sheet -grocery list -wish list -planning list	-catalog order -business letter -memorandums -proposals
REGULATORY (Language to control others and the world around you)	-directions -labels -rules for a game -signs	-rules and regulations -procedures -advertisements
INTERACTIONAL (Language to establish and maintain relationships with others)	-notes -greeting cards -invitations	-personal letters -jokes and riddles
PERSONAL (Language to develop and maintain one's own unique identity; say "who you are")	-journals -diaries -autobiographies	-eye witness accounts -trip logs -editorials
INFORMATIVE (Language to represent the world to others; impart what one knows)	-news articles -concept books -science books -recipes	-directions -posters -maps -booklets
HEURISTIC (Language to speculate and predict what will happen)	-question charts -fantasy/science fiction tables -hypotheses	
AESTHETIC (Language for its own sake, to express imagination, to entertain)	-modern fiction tales -plays/skits -historical fiction tales -fairy tales	

*Categories adapted from theories of M.A.K. Halliday and James Britton

THE WRITING PROCESS

The writing process consists of the following elements: prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing. These stages of the writing process and issues related to the teaching of writing are discussed in the ***North Carolina Communication Skills Teacher Handbook*** on pages 28-34.

All writing requires some form of **PREWRITING** activity. Students need to understand the need to "think or talk through" a piece of writing before the drafting begins. **DRAFTING** is the pouring out of ideas on paper. Good writing includes opportunities for multiple drafting. Students should feel comfortable in trial and error and free to take risks even if the attempt is not successful and they must begin again.

REVISION is a must in writing and should include peer and teacher conferencing. During the revision process, writers refine and clarify ideas, rework the shape or organization of the writing, refine word choices, delete extraneous ideas, expand upon relevant ideas, and polish it to their satisfaction. Once writers are satisfied with the content of the writing, editing should begin. The purpose of the **EDITING** stage is to "clean up" errors in spelling, grammar, usage, and mechanics. Teachers should understand that students edit at different levels depending upon their developmental level in language acquisition. When teachers focus on editing skills, they should accept that students can only concentrate on one or two skills at a time. Many times teachers want a perfect paper that students are not developmentally ready to produce. The most effective grammatical instruction grows out of the needs observed in student writing samples. Research indicates that the teaching of formal grammar in isolation has a negligible or even harmful effect on the teaching of writing since it usually replaces some instruction and practice in composition. **EVALUATION** of writing is ongoing, occuring at each stage in the writing process. Effective writing instruction should encourage the development of a consciousness in writers to evaluate their own work. Teachers should teach and model effective self-evaluation techniques.

All students need to experience the writing process; however, not all pieces the students write need to be taken through each stage of the process. When students write for different purposes, some activities are more suited to the entire writing process, and the writing activity should be carried through to **PUBLICATION**. Other writing activities do not require the student to continue the process through publication. Students may publish a piece only every week or two.

Note: *As a part of teaching the writing process to students, include the following guide. They will find it useful to have the guide stapled inside their writing folder or on a wall chart. Help them to understand that the guide is not to be followed as a rigid sequence, but as a reference or reminder to assist them with their writing.*

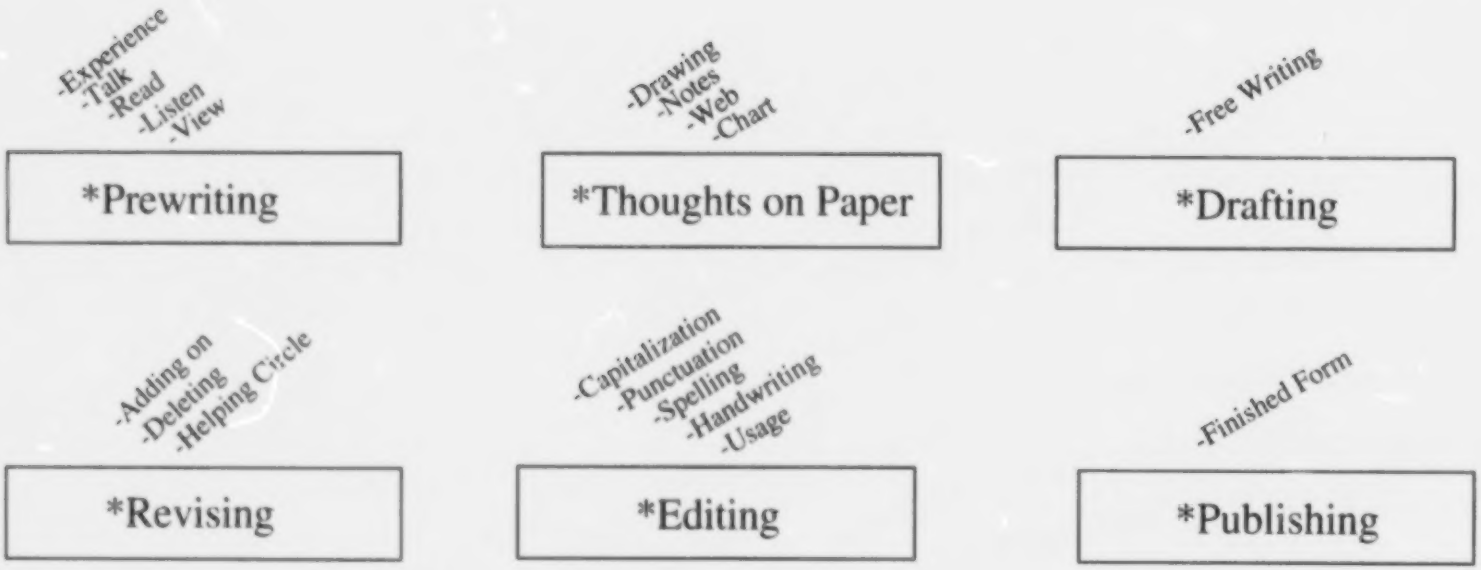
THE WRITING PROCESS
Grades 3-12
Student Guide

1. Find a Topic.
   Decide what you want to write about. If you can't do so, look at your list of topics; or talk to a friend; or look at a friend's list; or talk to the teacher.
2. Write a List of Words*.
   Think through your story and write key words; or talk through your story with your partner and write key words; or write key words; or talk with the teacher and have her/him write the key words.
3. Write a Draft.
   Write your first draft.
4. Will You Move On?
   If you like the draft story, move ahead. If you don't, go back to #1.
5. Do Your First Revision.
   Read your story to yourself.
   How does it sound? Is anything missing?
   Should anything be added to make sense?
6. Get a Reader's Opinion.
   Read your story to your writing partner; or read your story to your helping circle; or read your story to the teacher. Listen to the opinions and questions. Discuss ways to improve the story.
7. Make Changes in the Story.
   Add any details. Mark through and change words. Improve your story in every possible way. Perhaps, write a second draft.
8. Edit Your Story.
   Read your story to your writing partner.
   Edit for capitals
   punctuation
   spelling.
9. Ask for a Conference.
   Your teacher will ask questions like:
   Is your story now exactly as you want it?
   Is it ready for me to read?
   Would you please read this part aloud?
   Have you checked all punctuation, capitalization, and spelling?
10. Prepare for Publication.
    If your story is selected by you and your teacher for publication, decide on how you will publish—book, poster, tape recording, etc.
    Rewrite your story in your best handwriting, or make sure your handwriting is clear for the typist.
    Work on your illustrations.

HOORAY!! I'VE PUBLISHED A STORY!!!

*Another strategy such as a web may be used to get started.

The Writing Process



*Conference throughout the stages

THE WRITING PROCESS

Prewriting

Prewriting is the process that helps writers get ready to write. It's sometimes called "rehearsal." It is a time to gather information, experiment with ideas, and plot a course. Time spent on prewriting saves time later in the process

Prewriting activities include

1. Observing
2. Thinking
3. Reading
4. Remembering
5. Discussing

Help students get ready to write.

Prewriting strategies include

1. Talking
2. Writing lead sentences
3. Developing word banks/word wheels
4. Writing
5. Taking notes
6. Observing
7. Keeping journals
8. Reading
9. Selecting models
10. Role playing
11. Pantomiming
12. Giving oral directions
13. Working on a group project
14. Daydreaming
15. Drawing
16. Listing
17. Clustering

Help students realize they should remain open to new directions they may discover as they progress.

Teacher concerns include

1. Activities appropriate to student's age and interest
2. Student participation
3. Establishing a comfort zone

THE WRITING PROCESS

Generating Ideas for Writing

First Lines

First lines are crucial to a writer's work. They provide a window into what the work is going to be about. Take time to share some examples of first lines from some of the children's favorite books. First lines set the mood and signal events to come. They provide a framework for whole texts. Demonstrate writing first lines for students and have them speculate what might come next. They may like to generate and collect their own first lines or those from some of their favorite books.

Leads

Leads, the opening paragraphs of stories or books, set the stage and tone for the entire piece. Study the leads from some of the children's favorite books and note how the authors build the stories. Talk about possibilities of what might happen next based on the leads. Do the same thing with books that are unfamiliar to the students.

Model writing leads for students and then write together with them. Encourage them to write their own leads, keep them in a notebook or folder for future use, and to collect those from books they like as examples for further ideas.

Character Introductions

Select a number of children's books and short stories. Share with students how the authors introduce characters in the books. Note how some characters are introduced only through sketchy descriptions, some through very detailed descriptions, and others through their thoughts and emotions. Discuss with students why they think that particular descriptions seem to work in specific situations. Experiment with character descriptions in pieces that you model for students. Have them look for ways characters are introduced in books as they read. Talk about the ways that authors blend these character descriptions into the stories.

Then, in small groups, have students select characters they like from their own stories and write descriptions of them on separate pieces of "nudge" paper. Consider sharing these character descriptions. Discuss with students where they think their character descriptions might fit into their own stories. Let students decide whether to include the character descriptions or not.

Keep in mind that in second grade, students include generic characters such as Santa Claus, Superman, and princesses, themselves, and friends as their primary characters. By fourth grade they are using more created names for characters and can benefit from assistance in character identification and description.

Endings

Examine the last lines in children's books, especially those that leave children with a sense of mystery or wonder. Talk with students about what made the lines effective and discuss how authors work very hard on their last lines. Share some of your own writing with students and demonstrate

your own thought processes as you decide to change last lines or work with improving the lines. Together write a new ending to a favorite story and then have students try writing another ending to one of their own pieces. Many students will find it helpful to discuss options prior to putting their thoughts on paper.

Plot

As a class, write narrative pieces together. Lead students through the general format of a story by identifying the general plot. Then help students develop the characters, including names, appearances, and examples of typical behavior; the setting; the beginning; and the continuous plot. Discuss each part and help students make connections with the overall plot as each separate portion is developed. Then draft the story as a group.

Plan Narratives

Children usually see story at first in the barest form. Many young children have to draw pictures and tell their stories aloud before they can write them. They move from bare essentials in the pictures to logically connected actions in their pictures. When children reach the point that they can draft a story with a beginning, middle, conflict, and ending, they can benefit from planning the story ahead of time. Lead the children through a discussion of the parts of a story that can be included: the general plot; setting; characters including names, descriptions, and typical behaviors; problem; events; and solution. At first the children may not be able to remember the plan, and the teacher or someone else may have to take notes or tape the conversation to help them remember the plan. Later the children can complete a map or a web showing the intended story elements and important details. Older children may wish to keep a planning notebook in which ideas for plots, characters, beginnings, endings, and other ideas may be kept for future reference.

Dialogue

Have children review their own writing folder and use of dialogue by having students notice:

1. places where they could read a character's dialogue aloud so that it would sound like the person talking aloud;
2. places where characters are carrying on a conversation; and
3. the place where dialogue shows best what the characters are like.

Model examining and improving dialogue in a mini-lesson with pieces of your own writing by answering questions such as:

1. Is there turn-taking in the dialogue?
2. Do the characters react to each other or speak alone?
3. Are there distinctive elements of personality in the dialogue?
4. Is a character identifiable from the speech he/she uses?
5. Does the dialogue connect with the plot or does it exist as an excuse to have talking?
6. Is the dialogue blended into the narrative? (Graves, 1992, p.65.)

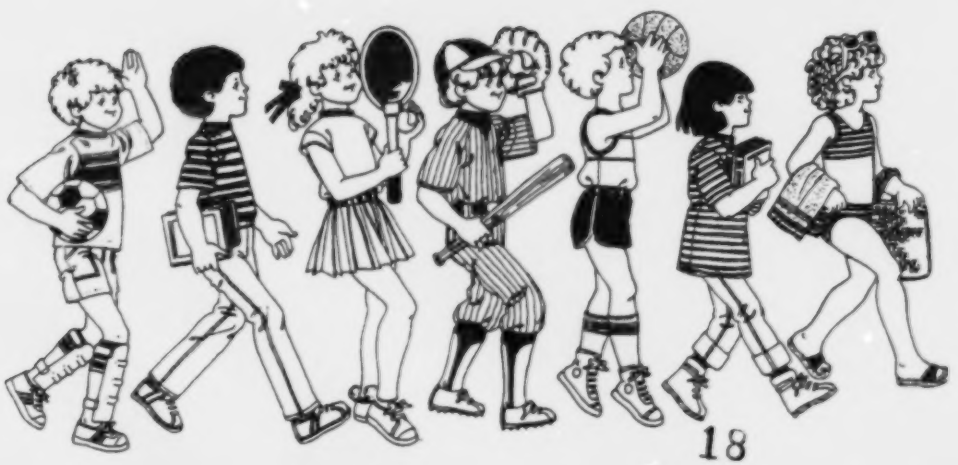
Typically students in second and third grade use dialogue in their writing to a moderate degree. By fourth grade, they should be making extensive use of dialogue in their narratives.

Adapted from Graves, Donald. ***Experimenting with Fiction: The Teacher's Reading/Writing Companion***. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann. (1989).

Selecting Topics for Writing

Choosing a topic to write a story about is an important decision for children. It is important that they be able to write on a predetermined topic for the North Carolina Writing Assessment. However, it is even more important that they be given CHOICES in their everyday writing. Students write more carefully about topics they know and care about. On the next few pages are sample topics for both personal and imaginative narratives. These are included to help students get started. It is desirable for students to generate their own topics. Sample prompts are included later in the publication for use in simulations of the state test. They should be used **sparingly**.

> Students write more carefully about topics they know and care about.



PERSONAL NARRATIVE WRITING TOPICS

Note: These topics may give students ideas to choose from in their own writing. As a class or individually, students can generate other topics which interest them.

1. My first day at school
2. The day of my biggest accident
3. A special visit to a relative's house
4. A special day at camp
5. A time I went to the fair or another special event
6. A shopping day I remember
7. A day that I was given an opportunity to use my talents
8. A science experiment I'll never forget
9. The day I learned how to dance
10. The worst day of my life
11. The most exciting day of my life
12. The time I got lost
13. A time I was helpful
14. A day that I was a cook
15. My favorite birthday
16. My most embarrassing moment
17. A special gift
18. A time I received a special award or recognition
19. A special day at the park or zoo
20. My first school field trip or one that I will always remember
21. The day I learned to swim or ride a bike or some other important task
22. Something I learned to do before I started to school
23. The day I lost a tooth
24. The day I went to the doctor or dentist
25. A special day at the beach or mountains
26. A day I got in trouble
27. A special holiday I remember
28. A time I traveled to a special place
29. An event that made me angry
30. An event that made me happy
31. An event that made me proud
32. A time I was a good loser
33. A time that I was polite
34. A time that I was a friend
35. A time that I was curious
36. A time I cooperated with others
37. My favorite Saturday morning
38. A time that I was understanding with others
39. A time that I showed my parents that I loved them
40. The time someone played a trick on me
41. The day I showed good sportsmanship

Source: ***The Write Stuff,*** Wake County Public Schools

These ideas should be used only to get students started. Students should select their own topics.

IMAGINE THAT....

Situations to Think and Write About

Use one of the following situations in an essay or short story. Students can generate many more situations in an orchestrated brainstorming activity followed by a modeled or think-aloud lesson.

IMAGINE THAT...

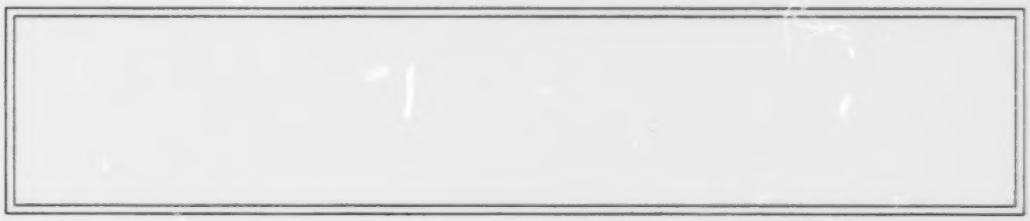
...everyone lived until age 150.
...all food came in the form of a pill.
...books were outlawed.
...mirrors never existed.
...animals could speak human language.
...dogs and cats were suddenly smarter than their owners.
...everyone had to live underground.
...you never needed any sleep.
...people grew younger instead of older.
...you could relive one day in the past.
...everyone looked exactly the same.
...the only colors in the world were white and black.
...people could become invisible at will.
...humans could live on land and under water without special equipment.
...photographs came to life as you looked at them.
...you could always tell what was going to happen in the next five minutes.
...television and movies were suddenly outlawed.
...everyone were self-educated.
...students could leave school at the age of 12.
...you were born and had always lived in a space station.
...you could swap places with another person for a week.
...there was only one child in every family.
...you could get straight A's all the time.
...there are no more sports allowed.
...that you have been granted a wish.
...that you have taken a ride on a magic carpet.
...someone accidentally left the lid off the class ant colony.
...you have a stuffed animal that comes to life.
...a young animal gets lost from its mother.
...you are a fruit or vegetable at the grocery store.
...you woke up on the middle of the night and looked out the window and saw frogs floating in the sky.
...you opened your lunch box on the school bus and an animal hopped out.
...you had a secret box and brought it to school.
...you woke up in the middle of the night and heard your toys talking.
...you found a small treasure chest and when you opened it, a genie appeared.
...you had an extra pair of legs or arms or eyes.
...you had a tail.

...you popped popcorn that wouldn't stop popping.
...all the animals escaped from the zoo.
...you have created a magic potion.
...you wanted to keep a tarantula or a boa constrictor as a pet.
...you won a million dollar prize.
...all the numbers in the world disappeared.
...you could be any animal in the world.
...you could fly like Superman.
...you could not talk or whisper for a week.
...you saw someone shoplifting.
...there were no trees or flowers on the earth.
...all the television sets in the world disappeared.

THE WRITING PROCESS

Generating Topics for Writing

Literature can be an excellent way for children to generate topics for writing. It can be a natural outgrowth of the reading or listening experience. For example, as an application/extension activity of Owl Moon by Jane Yolen, children could discuss their first experiences.



Encourage the children to recall the first time they did something special and to list their responses on the board. They may suggest experiences similar to the following.

I remember the first time I....

-rode a bicycle alone
-slept over at a friend's house
-went to school
-baked cookies
-rode on a roller coaster
-took a train to my grandmother's house
-skied down a steep hill.

Arrange the children in small groups to discuss their first times and to talk about how they felt before, during, and after the experiences.

Extending the activity

The children could make a list of their first time experiences in their journals to use as possible topics for future personal writing.

THE WRITING PROCESS

The Helping Circle
A Simple Guide

The helping circle gives the writer an opportunity to see how others are affected by a piece of writing. The writer might then revise the piece based on the comments in the helping circle.

1. Positive Statement

   Each member of the circle makes a positive comment about the piece of writing.

   Tell how the writing affected you or how it made you feel. You might also point out the words and phrases which have the strongest effect on you.

2. Summarizing

   Each member of the circle comments on the main point of the piece.

3. Asking for Help

   The writer has the opportunity to tell what she or he has had difficulty with and then asks for help.

4. Questions and Suggestions

   Each member of the circle asks the writer questions or makes suggestions for improvement. For example: "I liked the part about your Grandfather's early farming experiences. It might help if you told more about this."

Teachers need to model this process for students, focusing on specific aspects of writing they want students to include in their writing. Repeated modeling of specific comments and questions helps students internalize what makes good writing.

> Students learn when teachers model each part of the writing process. Repeated modeling of specific comments and questions helps students internalize what makes good writing.

THE WRITING PROCESS

Conferences

> At the core of the conference is a teacher asking a child to teach her about the subject. The aim is to foster a bursting desire to inform. So the teacher never implies a greater knowledge of this topic than the child possesses, nor treats the child as an inferior learner. We are in the business of helping children to value what they know. Ideally, the poorer the writing the greater interest the teacher will show in it—or rather in what it might become.
>
> *Donald H. Graves*

The writing process involves generating and organizing ideas, communicating with an audience, revising and editing. The teacher acts as a facilitator for the children's writing. This is best done through a process conference. During a conference, the writer discusses certain aspects of his/her writing with the teacher, peer, or a group. A conference may have different purposes:

1.	CONTENT	Help the child select a topic if necessary. Encourage the child to talk about it.
2.	FOCUSING	Help the child narrow down the topic. Rather than write about "dogs," suggest writing about his/her own dog.
3.	EXPANDING	Help the child recall, generate, or find more information on his/her topic.
4.	PROCESS	Help with revisions.
5.	EVALUATION	Help the child decide whether the writing is finished or needs more revising.
6.	EDITING	Correct spelling, punctuation, etc.

<u>Points to Remember in Conference</u>

The goal of a conference is to foster self-learning by the child. Teachers who have had experience with conferencing in the early grades make the following recommendations:

- play a low-key role, not dominating or talking too much
- show interest in what the child is trying to express
- get to know as many of the child's interests as possible

(Turbill, 1982)

- be aware of the child's strengths and weaknesses in writing.

The purpose of the conference is to help the student react to his or her own writing in order that he or she may diagnose possible problems and make an attempt to solve them.

Conference reminders:

1. listen to the child
2. respond to content first
3. follow, not lead
4. handle one problem at a time
5 keep it short

Possible Types of Questions and Responses Used During Conferences

- Tell me about your piece of writing.
- What part do you like the best? Why?
- Can you tell me more about it?
- What do you mean in this part?
- Do you have enough information?
- Do you have too much information?
- How did you feel when this happened? Did you write your feelings?
- Why did you choose this subject to write about?
- Do you have more than one story?
- What did you learn from this piece of writing?
- What do you intend to do with the next draft?
- What surprised you in the draft?
- How does this draft sound when you read it aloud?
- Why is this important to you?
- How does this piece compare to other pieces you have written? Why?
- What kinds of changes have you made from your last draft?
- Underline the part that tells what the draft is about.
- Circle the part that is the most exciting.
- What do you think you can do to make this piece better?
- What problems did you have or are you having?
- What is the most important thing you are trying to say?
- What works so well you'd like to try to develop it further?
- How do you feel about your story?
- I liked....
- Are you happy with your beginning and ending?
- Explain how your title fits your story.
- What are your action words? Can you add others?
- What do you need help on?
- What questions did your conference partner have for you?
- Where is this piece of writing taking you?
- Did you tell about something or did you show us by using examples?
- Can you think of a different way to say this?
- Does the beginning of your piece grab the reader's attention?
- What questions do you have of me?

Conference reminders:

1. listen to the child
2. respond to content first
3. follow, don't lead
4. handle one problem at a time
5. keep it short

Ask children to examine the texts of their favorite authors right along with the texts they write in the same genre. It helps students to focus on what professional writers do as they check the quality of their own writing.

Adapted from Donald Graves

26

THE WRITING PROCESS

Revision

Ways to Help Students Learn to Read Their Own Work

1. Underline the sentence that shows most what your piece is about. Read the sentence aloud to a friend. Ask your friend to tell you what pictures the line releases in their mind.

2. Underline the sentence that tells most what your piece is about.

3. Read your first three lines to a friend. After reading those lines, have your friend tell you all the things he/she wants to know from the clues you gave in those first three lines. Open up the book you are reading and see how your author handled his first lines. Speculate together on what clues the author gives in those first lines about the rest of the book or story.

4. Underline the one, two, or three lines that your piece is least about.

5. Find a place where someone speaks in your text. Ask your friend what the person sounds like or what he/she thinks will come next in the conversation. Open the book you are reading and see how your author handles dialogue.

6. Find a place where you show what a character looks like. Open the book you are reading and see how your author reveals the characters.

7. Underline the verbs in your first ten lines. Underline the words that are doing words. Write down the verbs your author used in the first ten lines.

8. Underline words you like the sound of.

We constantly ask children to examine the texts of their favorite authors right along with the texts they write in the same genre. This is not an exhaustive list but it does show you what writers look for in texts they have written to check the quality of their writing. I (Donald Graves) show in the following books how to help students read their writing:

Experiment with Fiction
Investigate Nonfiction
Explore Poetry

If you wish to explore how you as professionals can help each other read your texts or help each other to be writers, I suggest pp. 124-126 in ***Discover Your Own Literacy.***

Source: Graves, Donald. ***Building Portfolios: Keep a Good Idea Growing****, Charlotte, NC. May, 1993.*

THE WRITING PROCESS
Revision/Evaluation

Narrative

Self-Evaluation

_____ 1. I begin the story in a way that will interest the readers.

_____ 2. This is an interesting story.

_____ 3. I tell the story in good order so that readers can follow the action as it happens.

_____ 4. I describe the characters so that my readers can see and hear them.

_____ 5. I describe the setting so that readers will feel that they are there.

_____ 6. I end the story in an interesting way.

_____ 7. All my sentences are clear and complete.

_____ 8. I use good strong words—especially active verbs.

Group Response*

_____ 1. I get interested right at the first.

_____ 2. The story keeps me interested from beginning to end.

_____ 3. You describe the scene so clearly that I feel that I am there.
I can see
I can hear
I can touch
I can smell and/or taste

_____ 4. You tell me enough about the characters that I can see and hear them.

_____ 5. You clearly describe what happened.

_____ 6. I like the way the story ends.

_____ 7. You tell the events in the right order.

_____ 8. Your sentences are all clear.

_____ 9. You use lively verbs and strong descriptive words.

*Students need to explain what they mean and to give examples or evidence from the selection.

THE WRITING PROCESS

Student Editing Checklist

Title _____

Name _____

Date _____

Capitalization

- ☐ Each sentence begins with a capital letter.
- ☐ Names of people and places are capitalized.
- ☐ Each important word in my title is capitalized.

Punctuation

- ☐ Each sentence ends with a period, a question mark, or an exclamation point.
- ☐ I used quotation marks to show where speech begins and ends.
- ☐ I used commas where needed.

General

- ☐ I corrected all misspelled words to the best of my ability.
- ☐ I used descriptive language in my writing.
- ☐ My final copy is in my handwriting.
- ☐ I have checked for errors before handing in my work.

Editing Markings

Use colored pencils to edit before you write your final draft.

¶ Begin new paragraph

Circle misspelled words

∧ Add word(s) or punctuation

Take out word(s)

Move words

≡ Capitalize a letter

*From **Journeys, Teacher Resource Book**, Ginn Canada, 1988.*

THE WRITING PROCESS

Self-Evaluation

_____ 1. How much time did you spend on this paper?

_____ 2. Put a squiggly line beside the passages you feel are best. These should be the strengths of your paper.

_____ 3. Circle new words or "just right" words you've used.

_____ 4. Underline two sentences which use different sentence patterns.

_____ 5. Is this a paper you would like to read aloud to the entire class? Why or why not?_____

_____

_____ 6. What did you try to improve on, or experiment with, in this paper? How successful were you?

_____ 7. What are the weaknesses?_____

_____

_____ 8. How does the paper compare with others you have written this year?

_____ 9. Place an X over punctuation, spelling, usage, or sentence structure where you need help or clarification.

_____ 10 Put a double line under the most exact, concrete passage.

_____ 11. What one thing will you do to improve your next piece of writing?

_____ 12. Write any questions you have about this paper.

- Author Unknown

PART II

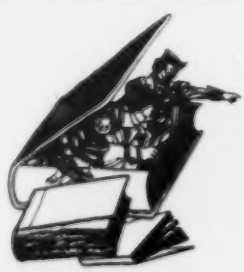
Narratives and Concept of Story

This section gives tips for developing students' sense of story through the study of children's literature and the use of response logs. Suggestions for using memories, family stories, and story maps to generate narratives are included.

A narrative tells a story or what happened. In the personal narrative, the student recounts events that he/she has experienced, read, or heard about. Personal narratives may not always have the plot and character development typical of more sophisticated stories. In the imaginative narrative, the student writes a story that revolves around an event and has a resolution. A fully developed story involves a conflict, which is introduced in the beginning, becomes more complicated in the middle, and is resolved in the end.

from ***Focused Holistic Scoring Guide****, 1992-94, p. 4*

Story telling, children's literature, folk music, and drama are natural sources for developing children's concept of story and for composing narratives. Time spent in developing children's sense of narrative through these means pays dividends when children write.



What is a Narrative?

"A narrative tells a story or what happened. In the personal narrative, the student recounts events that he/she has experienced, read, or heard about. Personal narratives may not always have the plot and character development typical of more sophisticated stories. In the imaginative narrative, the student writes a story that revolves around an event and has a resolution." A fully developed story involves a conflict, which is introduced in the beginning, becomes more complicated in the middle, and is resolved in the end.

Personal narratives are often one of the first types of writing that children do. They write about themselves and their experiences within the community of their homes, schools, and neighborhoods. They become much more engaged when they write about themselves in personal narratives because they are experts on the topic of their lives. **Usually teachers do not assign topics for personal narratives because students select and write about experiences and things that interest them.** Often students keep a list of topics for personal narratives in their writing folders or in a writing notebook. Then they choose a topic or an event in their lives to draft, revise, and possibly publish. Many times ideas for personal narratives come from journal entries which can be developed through the stages of the writing process. The audience for personal narratives often will be the students themselves, teachers, family members, and/or peers.

A narrative is a story that includes characters or things involved in an action as well as the setting for where the action takes place. Often the characters are confronted with a problem or some complication that they must deal with. The resolution brings closure to the story.

Narratives then may include some or all of the following:

Main character and/or other characters - This includes a description of the character(s).
Setting - Where did the story take place?
Goal - This is typically a problem or other conflict which needs to be resolved.
Plot - Describes the character's actions, thoughts, feelings and usually leads to a high point in the story where the character is able to see how the events fit together.
Resolution - This brings closure to the story. It may be a consequence that results from the action of the main character or from the attempt of the character to resolve the problem. Sometimes this may be a reaction by the main character to the action in the story.

The Narrative

Beginning

Begin the story in an interesting way and determine from what point of view the story will be told.

Point of View:
Omniscient - able to see into the minds of more than one character: reader is "all knowing"
Third Person - central observer of the story limited to his/her own observations and thoughts
First Person - views and thoughts of one character

The story may begin with a question, an action-filled sentence, or a direct quotation.

Introduce the characters:

Mention the main characters and briefly tell who they are and how they are involved in the story. Characters can be developed in four ways:

Appearance - How the character looks (facial, body, dress, mannerisms, gestures).
Action - What characters do. Does it match their dialogue?
Dialogue - What characters say. Speech is formal with adults, informal with friends; use of dialect.
Monologue - What characters think.

Briefly give the setting of the story

Tell where and when the action of the story occurs.

Location
Weather
Time of day and passage of time
Time period

Quickly identify the situation or problem

Get to the point of the story as quickly as possible.

Middle

Elaborate with details of the situation or problem that will build the action of the story. Each event needs to build upon previous events, reaching a pinnacle before the resolution of the problem. The characters face roadblocks in the middle. Typically, as one is removed another emerges postponing the solution.

Ending

To end the story, settle the problem or resolve the situation which was identified in the beginning.

Listed in the Appendix are titles of children's books that teachers may use as examples of how different parts of the story may be developed.

Note: Personal narratives don't always have problems and solutions.

Adapted from Tompkins, Gail, (1990)
Teaching Writing: Balancing Process and Product.

DEVELOPING CHILDREN'S CONCEPT OF STORY

Young children develop a concept of story as they hear adults or older children read stories to them or tell them tales about when they were little. Most but not all children come to school with a basic concept of story because someone has told them about a time when they were little or other family tales. We as teachers enhance and build upon this basic sense of story when we read to children and share our own stories with children.

There are several specific ways that children's basic concept of story can be enhanced. Reading stories aloud to children and giving them opportunities to read stories to themselves is the most fundamental way concept of story can be developed. Reading to students helps them internalize more sophisticated language and to gain control over the parts of a story. Repeated readings of the same stories enable children to be more thoughtful, insightful, and specific in their comments about stories.

Talking about stories makes it possible for children to further enhance their concept of story and to understand the basic elements in greater depth as they reflect on the stories they have heard and read. One way to help students talk about these stories is to have small groups or the class sit in a circle to discuss literature. The teacher begins by asking students "What do you think?" Without raising their hands, learners give their reactions, comments, and questions. There are no right or wrong answers, and students and teachers build on each others' comments.

In the second part of the "grand conversation," the teacher leads the discussion, focusing on plot, theme, and characters. These questions need to be open-ended, and the teacher may gain ideas for mini-lessons as the group discusses theme, characters, characters' actions, and the author's craft. (For more information see ***Grand Conversations*** by Stephanie McConaughy.)

Retelling stories over and over refines students' comprehension and develops their understanding of story elements. Guided retellings either through prompting by the teacher or through another means helps students remember more of the story and enables them over time to create more sophisticated original stories of their own.

Examining the structure of stories either through the use of a story grammar or the elements of literature helps children organize their knowledge of stories by assisting them in reading and composing their own stories. In this way students are overtly taught to examine how authors organize their stories. They provide a general framework rather than a formula to be followed. More complex stories seem to contain these elements.

STORY MAPS

A story map pulls together all of the elements of a story in a graphic presentation. Story maps help students construct meaning as they understand not only the story elements but their relationship to one another. A story map typically includes the setting, characters, problems, events, and resolution of a story. Story maps make children think about how to plan and organize stories, and they help to eliminate unnecessary or unrelated details that cause the story to become boring and episodic.

Story maps form the basis for understanding most stories. They help children reconstruct stories that they read and construct stories that they write. Some graphic organizers can be used to help children see relationships between characters, see how the setting relates to the story, or identify the sequence of events in the story.

Children need to become familiar with various graphic organizers in order to help them choose the organizer they feel most comfortable with when composing or interpreting writing. They are particularly useful for children to use in revising their writing.

Personal narratives may recount events. They may not always have problems and solutions.

The major elements of a story are included in this planning guide. It is useful for planning an innovation on text, for shared writing, or for individual students to use in their own writing as a guide for planning or revision.

Story Grammar Elements

CHARACTER

Who will be in your story? _____

What are their names? _____

Describe your main characters. _____

_____

SETTING

Where does your story take place? _____

When does your story happen? _____

GOAL

What does your main character want to accomplish in this story? _____

_____

What is going to interfere with your characters as they try to attain their goal? _____

_____

How is the main character going to overcome this problem? _____

_____

PLOT

What does the main character do first? _____

_____

How does your character feel about this? _____

What does your character do next? _____

What results from these actions? _____

RESOLUTION

What happens to the main character at the end of the story? _____

_____

How does your character feel now? _____

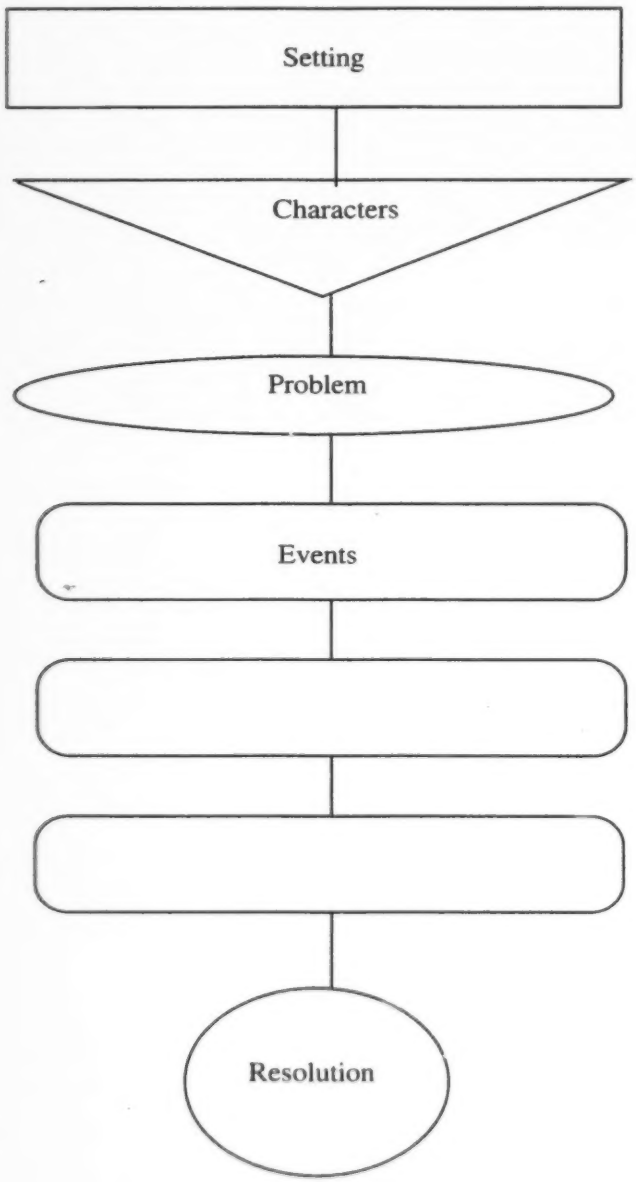
How is your story going to end? _____

_____

Davis, 1989

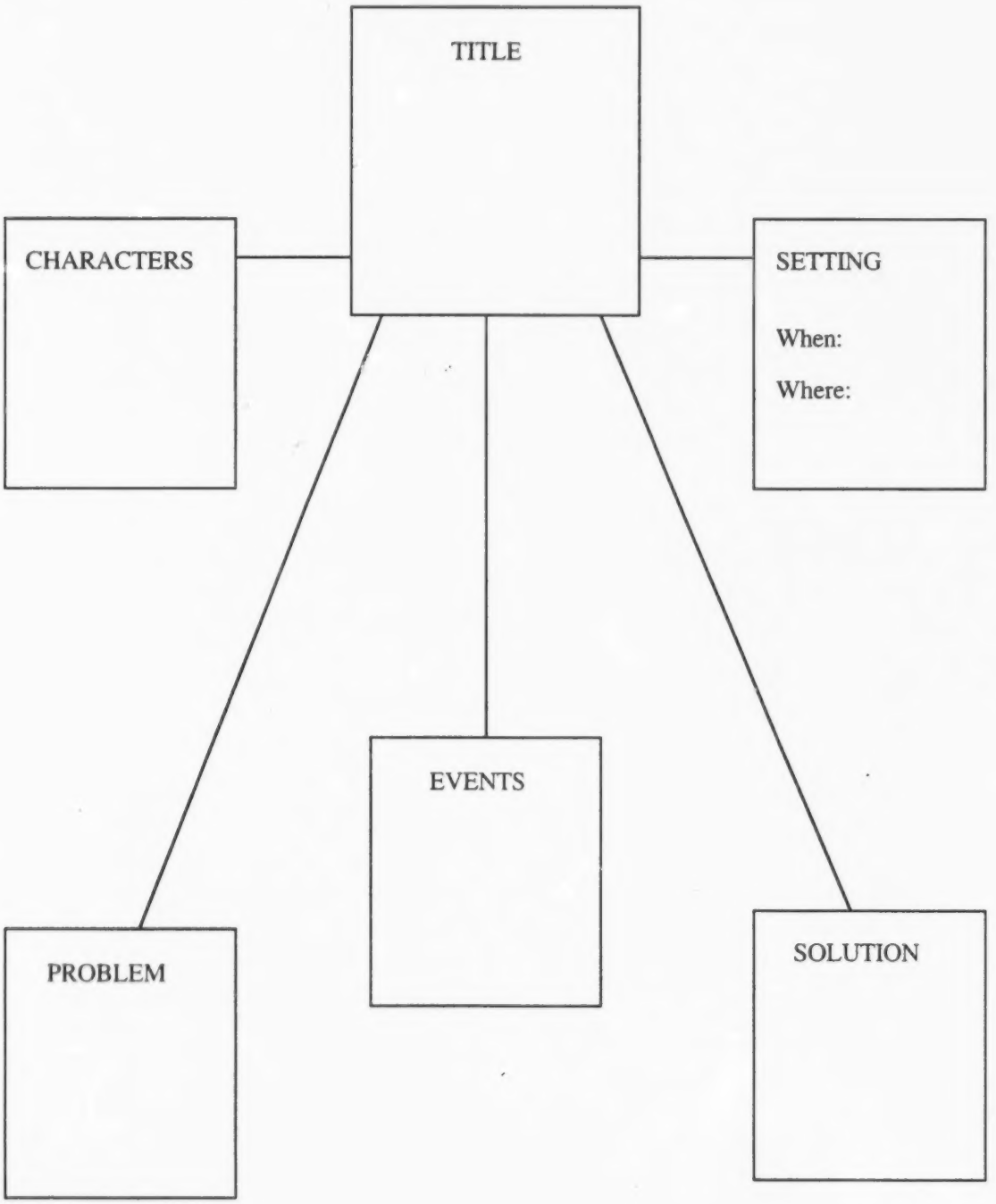
Story Map

Title:



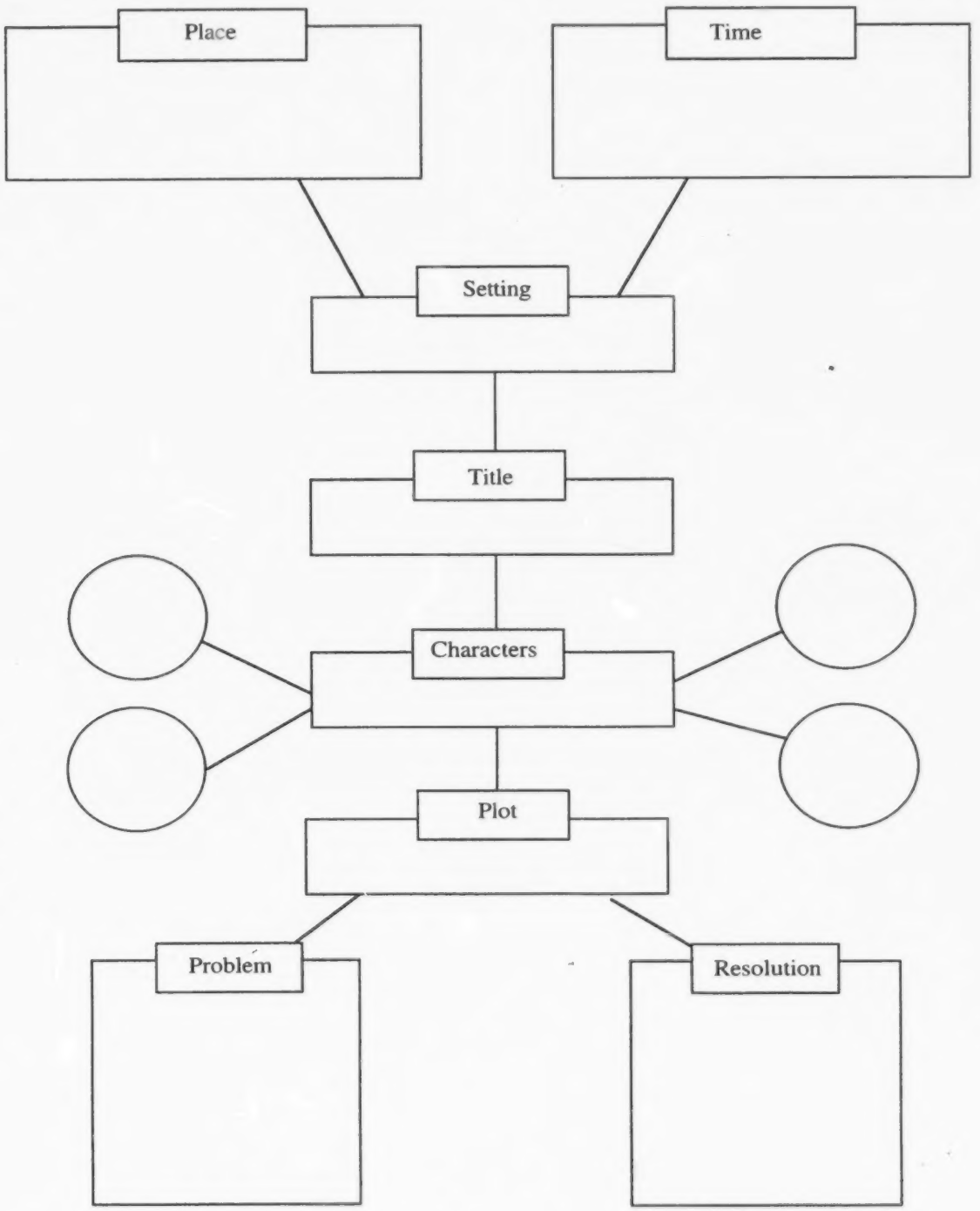
Graphic Organizer, c. 1991
The Apple Peddler, Inc.

Story Map



Journeys: Teacher Resource Book.
Ginn Canada

STORY MAP



San Juan School District Staff
Development Options
Ralphene Lee, Mentor

STORY MAP

Title: _____

Setting:

Characters: _____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

Problem:

Event 1 _____
Event 2 _____
Event 3 _____
Event 4 _____
Event 5 _____

Solution:

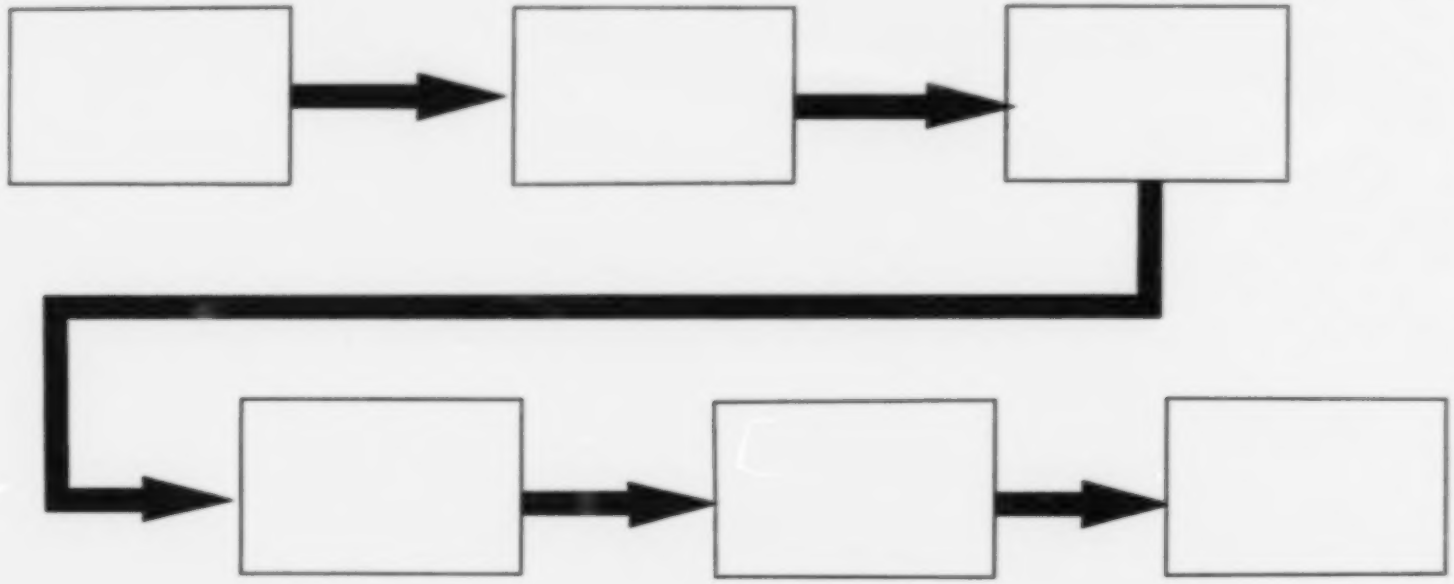
STORY CHART

NOTE: The questions in the Story Chart form the basis for understanding most stories. They will help the children to reconstruct stories that they read and to construct stories that they write. Therefore, you may wish to prepare the Story Chart on chart paper for reference when discussing stories that the children are reading or writing. You may also wish to place the questions on separate cardboard strips so that the children can manipulate them as they discuss or compose stories.

STORY CHART	
Characters	Who or what is the story about?
Setting	When and where does the story take place?
Problem	What is the problem?
Events	What happens in the story?
Solution	How does the story end?

Sequence Chain

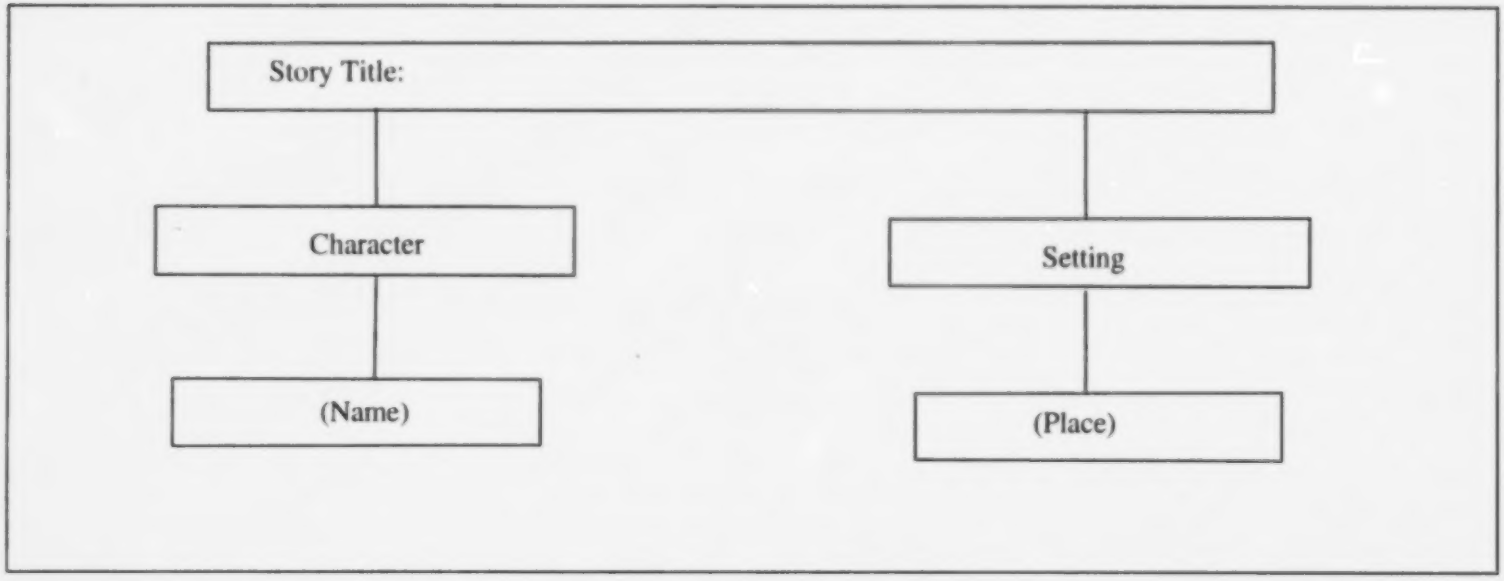
The sequence chain is useful for both fiction and content area reading and writing. The chart will help children reconstruct stories or other texts they read and to construct stories and nonfiction texts they write. The boxes could be written on post it notes or cut apart so that children can rearrange them as they write.



WRITER'S CRAFT

Interpreting to note details of character and setting

Invite the children to discuss the main idea of the story. To help them appreciate how the author makes the character and the setting more interesting, invite them to find details that tell what the main characters were like and what they did and details that describe the setting.



Conclude by discussing how the author made the story more interesting by providing details about the character and the setting. As a class, plan these parts for a class story.

Ideas for Developing Sense of Narrative and for Creating Narratives

Employ talk as a way to plan for stories. Talking helps children clarify their thoughts. Talking aids comprehension. Students who talk about a topic understand it better than students who do not. Students need to talk before they write. Prewriting conferences improve student writing. Students who talk about what they want to say with the teacher or a partner before they write spend less time drafting and also write more effectively than students who begin writing without a conference. Noted children's author Robert Munsch tells a story hundreds of times before he writes it down. (Calkins, 1991, p.149)

Talk provides a window on children's thinking. When students talk about their stories, teachers can ask "nudge" questions to get them to think about particular parts of stories that may need further expansion or examination. These questions can provide scaffolding to further develop their sense of story and/or their narratives.

Use literature discussion groups to develop children's knowledge of literature, the understanding of characters, and the writing of different authors. The thinking, talking, exploration, and exposure to literature can only serve to enhance children's language and, therefore, their writing.

Employ the art of storytelling. "Young storytellers soon learn the importance of character and setting descriptions, effective beginnings and endings, and plot development and sequence. Through multiple opportunities to retell favorite stories to peers in small groups, children develop oral narrative abilities, deeper respect for the craft of authors, and insights into story development—skills they can transfer to both their reading and writing." (Cullinan,1993, p.12)

Storytelling helps the listeners develop a sense of story. Listeners create the story in the "theater of the mind" in company with the storyteller. As they listen, students make pictures in their minds, revise the pictures as they absorb new information, attempt to figure out the story's direction, and confirm their predictions. Children need to talk about their listening experience and to compare what they heard with someone else. If an illustrated version of the story is available, it helps children to be able to compare what they heard and imagined with that of an experienced illustrator. (Cullinan, 1993, pp. 29-30)

"Simple drama techniques-such as interviewing story characters, point-of-view retelling, or improvising key moments from the story—can be used to help students develop their thinking and feelings about the story characters. Initial responses often change sharply as students begin to appreciate the complexities of story characters and of the dilemmas they have faced in struggling to make decisions. Time to get inside a story situation and fully appreciate a character's point of view can go a long way toward helping students make a story their own. And this response will lead to retelling." (Cullinan, 1993, p. 30)

Reader's theater and creative drama offer opportunities for children to enjoy story as well as to develop further insights into story development—skills they can transfer to both their reading and writing.

Use story theater with folk tales or other stories that have lots of action. Read the story and pause for players to pantomime the actions. If illustrations are available, let students examine the illustrations and then act out the story as you reread it for them.

Use repetitive sequence stories that require children to join in on the refrain and to develop sound effects. Another source might be the use of story songs such as "Frog Went A-Courtin," ballads, or traditional folk tales. Children might choose to rewrite these stories in narrative format.

Retelling stories offers students a chance to make exciting discoveries about stories. Retelling a story to other students in small groups helps develop many possibilities. Bits of information or parts of the story take on new meaning or become significant as the story is retold and possibly modified as it is passed from one child to another. New bits of information may be added, and children understand the differences that may be possible if the story were told as a ghost story, tall tale, memory, cautionary tale, or fairy tale.

Story retellings can lead to extensions of the story, making it possible to examine the story again in a fresh light. (Cullinan, 1993, p. 30)

Rather than writing a story, have students compose a story through art, drama, movement, or music. Then students can share and compare their creations to see the differences. (Harste, Short, and Burke, 1988, p. 316)

Almost any situation in a story, narrative poem, biography, or social studies text can begin to come to life through the use of imagination. Ask students to be a character in the narrative and respond to questions as if being interviewed. They are to respond to the questions by using the first person "I." Sometimes the teacher may probe by saying, "Tell us more," and sometimes ask for action by saying, "Get up and show us exactly how you..." Becoming the character in their minds can help students develop greater insights into the story. (Cullinan, 1993, p.32)

Good readers make predictions and try to problem solve as they read. When they become writers, they try to surprise their own readers, upsetting prediction without losing credibility. Use improvisation and then extend the dialogue and actions to show what might happen next. Take a story and use improvisation as in the previous example. Then have every child write a prediction and possible solution to a problem. Select one or two possibilities for a few students to act out and extend to endings of the story through role playing. Discuss the possibilities and select the one that seems most plausible. Then read the ending to the story and compare what was predicted with the real ending.

Have children plan a play or a story by acting it out and talking about it prior to writing it down. The first time or two they may act out the story and then begin to add dialogue later. Writing the story or play down may come even later after the story has been told and retold.

Study beginnings, endings, leads, and other structures of favorite picture books, novels, or memoirs such as ***Little House on the Prairie; Sarah, Plain and Tall; Owl Moon; The Relatives Came; When I Was Young in the Mountains;*** and ***Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters.***

Keep a notebook of writing ideas, leads, thoughts, beginnings, plots, endings, and favorite quotations. Share entries and your use of them with students to help them learn to discover interesting leads or entries to pursue in narrative or other formats. Encourage students to keep such a notebook of ideas.

Students may enjoy retelling a story from the perspective of different characters in the story. The perspective taken should be different from that in the original story.

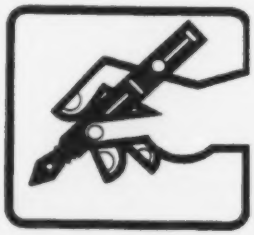
Wordless picture books can be used as the source for story ideas. Children can write a text for each picture. These texts can provide structure to enhance children's concept of story.

Collect cartoons to use as story starters. Students can write narratives based on the sequence of pictures. These cartoons can be especially helpful to students who have difficulty sequencing the events of a narrative.

Calkins, Lucy McCormick. ***Living Between the Lines***. Portsmouth, New Hampshire: Heinemann Press. (1991).

Cullinan, Bernice N.(Ed.). ***Children's Voices: Talk in the Classroom***. Newark, Delaware: International Reading Association. (1993)

Harste, Jerome C.; Short, Kathy, G.; and Burke, Carolyn. ***Creating Classrooms for Authors: The Reading-Writing Connection***. Portsmouth, New Hampshire: Heinemann Press. (1988).



Using Memories as Sources for Narratives

Use childhood photos from your own past as a model to help children write their own stories. Select several photographs and tell the story that each picture brings to your mind. Have students find favorite photographs from their own lives or from their own families. Share the stories orally from several of the photographs. Then the students may write the stories from their photographs or write family stories from the family photographs.

Favorite childhood toys can trigger many memories for children. Share your favorite toy from childhood and tell about some of your good memories. Students will enjoy bringing their own toys to share stories orally and in print.

The events of everyday life can provide the material for both real and imaginative narratives. For example, look for stories in what you did yesterday. Make a list of the things you did and then see if a story emerges. It is better to select a specific time period and to brainstorm your impressions of that part of the day. Is there something specific that emerges as an idea or does something that happened give you an idea for an imaginative narrative? Model your strategies through a think-aloud for your students. Following this procedure helps children avoid the "bed-to-bed" stories in which everything in the day is treated with equal importance. Sometimes students have a tendency to equate brushing teeth and getting dressed for bed with the other more important events of the day.

Have students take five minutes or a single sheet of notebook paper and write their autobiography. Share several examples. Discuss parts that worked especially well. Then go back and do the five minute write again. Note the differences and select the best parts to follow-up on in the form of a more specific narrative.

Have students brainstorm memories and interview parents, grandparents, friends, and siblings for favorite memories or events that can serve as ideas for narratives. Share these stories in a storytelling circle or with a partner prior to writing them down. Collect special objects from home to be used as ideas for stories.

Use shoeboxes to help students develop stories. Bring a shoebox, knapsack, or bag containing five to ten personal items from home. Use each item to tell the class about a personal experience or interest. Then have students do the same thing in pairs or small groups. Students may then decide to use one of their own experiences or that of a classmate as the basis for a narrative. (Harste, Short, and Burke, 1988, p. 276)

After students have participated in a common experience such as a field trip, science project, or novel study, have them write a narrative summarizing what they consider to be the most important parts of that experience. Then in pairs, ask students to compare their versions of the story to see what was meaningful to each student. When differences occur, students need to explain why they considered something important or less important. Then as a group compare insights about the things that were meaningful to the different students. (Harste, Short, and Burke, 1988, p. 314)

Develop students' sense of narrative by beginning to share stories from your own family life. Resources such as James Stevenson's ***Higher on the Door*** or Vera Rosenbluth's ***Keeping Family Stories Alive*** provide examples of memories and tips for helping children to gather their own home stories. (Cullinan, 1993, p.31)

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Narrative Writing

Use favorite children's books to introduce students to the components of narratives. Begin with *setting* by sharing examples of children's books in which the setting strongly influences the story. Then as students read books, have them locate examples of interesting setting descriptions. As students share their writing, have them listen for examples of strong setting statements in each other's writing. List these examples on a chart in the classroom. Periodically add a new component to the study as the year progresses. Leave up the charts with specific examples for reference. Students will begin to look for these elements in their own writing and the writing of others.

Narrative Writing

Setting	People/Characters
Problem	Events/Action
Solution	Conclusion/Ending
Feelings/Humor	Dialogue

Source: Karlitz, E.G. ***Beyond the Author's Chair.*** *Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann. (1993).*

Use of Response Journals

The response log allows children the opportunity to react, interpret, or record what they think about a piece of literature or text. It allows writers to connect their reading to writing and extend the meaning of what they have read. The response journal may be an intellectual, emotional, personal, or general reaction to a piece of literature, but it goes beyond summarizing and factual recall. The reading response log encourages students to interact with text in the widest range of response possible. The reaction may be a response to an open-ended question, illustration, or freewriting. The response log is a convenient, familiar, and flexible method for students to explore and reflect on their personal responses to experiences.

The response journal can be used to develop small group discussions, guide student/teacher conferences, track independent reading, maintain personal dialogues, and evaluate individual student progress.

Teachers need to keep a response log that can be shared with students. They need to model the questions they ask themselves in their logs.

Students need to learn to ask and answer their own questions. They need to become critical readers if they are to become fully literate adults.

Listed below are some sample open-ended questions that can be used with students as they learn to identify important questions to be answered.

Thinking about My Reading

***Fiction Books* Level II**

Author

1. What do you know about the author?
2. Why do you think the author wrote the book?
3. What is the author trying to tell us?
4. What do we learn about the personality or the interests of the author?
5. What did the author have to know to write the book?

Characters
(The questions below assume that the main characters are people, but they are relevant even when the main characters are animals, toys or whatever.)

1. Who are the main characters?
2. What kind of people are they?
3. Do you like/dislike them? Why?
4. Why are they important in the story?
5. Why did they behave as they did?
6. Do you know anyone like them?
7. How do they change throughout the story?

8. How are the characters different/alike?
9. Are people really like these characters?
10. Was the behavior of a particular character right or wrong?

The Story

Plot:

1. What happened in the story? What was the sequence of events?
2. What might have happened if a certain action had not taken place?
3. Were you able to predict the ending?
4. What other way might the story have ended?
5. Under a heading (such as People, Animals, Places, Things) list important words.
6. Which chapter do you think is the most important to the story? Why?

Setting:

1. Where did the story take place?
2. What was the place like?
3. Could there be a place like this? Do you know of a place like this?
4. When did the story take place? (past, present, future)
5. Which part of the story best describes the setting?
6. How does the writer create the atmosphere for the setting?
7. Are there any particular words that create this atmosphere?

Mood:

1. How did you feel while reading the book? Why did you feel that way?
2. What was the saddest/funniest incident?
3. What was the most exciting/unusual/mysterious incident?
4. How did the author make you feel the way you did?
5. What did you remember most about the story?
6. Does the mood of the story change? How?

Style:

1. How did the author describe the characters?
2. Were there any unusual ways of saying things?
3. Does the author give you enough information?
4. How does the author keep you interested?
5. What special words does the author use to help you hear, see, smell, taste things?
6. What pictures has the author's writing left in your mind?
7. What strengths does the author have? What do you like about his/her style?

Thinking about My Reading

Informational Books Level II

Content:

1. What is the book about?
2. Was the information presented clearly?
3. Did the title mislead you? (Did you expect to discover information that wasn't there?)
4. Did the content of the book give you enough information? If not, what else do you need to know? Will you need to go to other books?

Accuracy:

1. Who is the author? Is the author well qualified to write about this topic? (Check book jacket; title page; introduction; foreword; other books.)
2. Does the book provide up-to-date information? (Check publishing date. Are there any revised editions? Are there more recent books about the same topic?)
3. Does the author let you know when he/she is stating a fact or expressing an opinion? (Look for key words such as 'I think...' or 'Scientists believe...' or 'As far as we know...' or 'Perhaps...')

Style:

1. Is the author's style clear and direct?
2. Was information well organized?
3. Is the information told straight to you or is it given in story form?
4. Does the book make you want to learn more about your topic?

Illustrations:

1. Were illustrations used?
2. Did the author use diagrams, photographs, maps, charts, graphs, tables?
3. If so, did these help you to understand the text better? If labels and captions were used, did they help?

Organization:

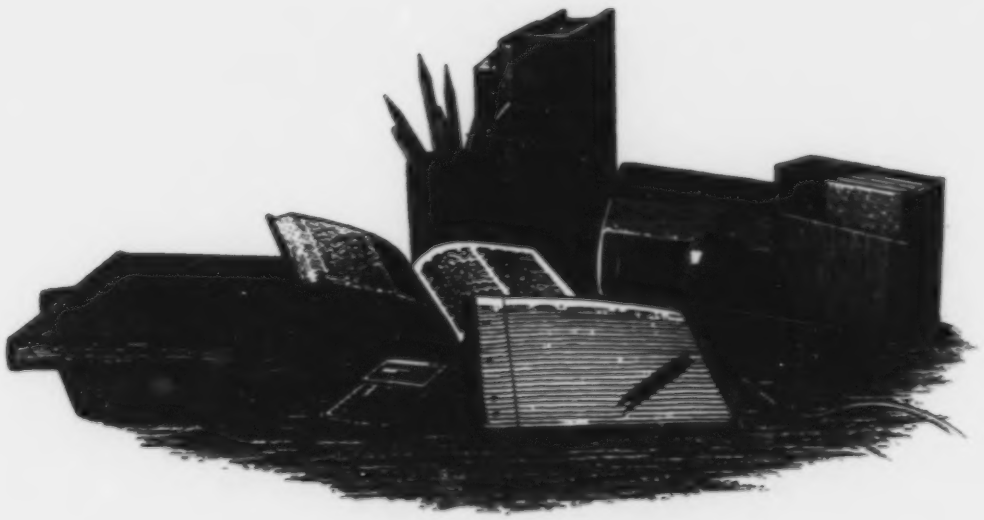
1. Did you use the Table of Contents or the Index?
2. Did they help you to find information quickly?
3. Did headings and sub-headings help you to 'see' what was in the book?

Hornsby, David; Sukarna, Deborah, and Parry, Jo-Ann. ***Read On: A Conference Approach to Reading.*** *Melbourne, Australia: Nelson. 160-162. (1986).*

PART III

Preparation for the North Carolina Writing Assessment

The best preparation for the writing test is to establish a comprehensive writing program which includes all modes of writing for a variety of purposes. Then in this context, students will have special instruction in strategies for narrative writing, both personal and imaginative. This section includes a summary of criteria used in assessing test papers, provides specific strategies to help students prepare for the test, gives cautions for teachers to keep in mind, and lists sample prompts for test simulations.



GRADE 4

The best preparation for the writing test is to establish a broad writing program which includes all modes of writing for a variety of purposes and audiences. Then in this context, students will have special instruction in strategies for narrative writing, both personal and imaginative.

Student Preparation: Writing

- Establish a classroom atmosphere of trust where taking risks is encouraged and modeled.
- Structure instruction so that there are daily opportunities for meaningful and purposeful writing. Writing should be an integral part of all content areas.
- Ensure that students write for a variety of purposes and audiences.
- Model reading and writing processes and strategies through mini-lesson "think alouds."
- Model and engage students in working selected pieces through to publication using the writing process.
- Demonstrate and engage students in a variety of strategies writers use to:
  . get topics
  . narrow focus
  . organize ideas
  . get started
  . revise for content
  . edit for error reduction
  . publish works
- Use good literature as a model for helping students improve their own writing. Once a selection has been enjoyed for its meaning and aesthetic value, begin to examine the piece for the writer's craft. For example, look at how writers hook readers—through story leads, effective story endings, and the author's word choice. Also, look at how the writer deals with characters and setting. (See the appendix for suggested book titles.)
- Use graphic organizers as a means for helping students understand story structure or story grammar—how stories work. (See the story maps on pages to 32-37.)

WRITE! WRITE! WRITE!
REVISE FOR CONTENT! REVISE FOR CONTENT! REVISE FOR CONTENT!
EDIT FOR ERROR REDUCTION!

GRADE 4

The Narrative: Summary of Criteria

Composition Purpose

- The narrative composition focuses on action and the sequencing of events within the overall action.
- There must be description of people or things involved in the action as well as the setting of the action.
- The narrative tells a story or what happened.
- In the personal narrative, the student recounts an event that he/she experienced, read, or heard about.
- In the imaginative narrative, the student writes a story that revolves around an event and has a resolution.

Composing Characteristics

- Must clearly establish a focus as it fulfills the assignment of the prompt.
- May effectively use an inductive organizational plan which does not actually identify the subject matter at the beginning and may not literally identify the subject matter at all.
- Must be determined in light of the method of development chosen by the writer, whether it be chronological or thematic.

Supporting Details

- Provides sufficient elaboration to present the events clearly.
- Should be relevant and clear.
- Must be related to what happens in the narrative.
- Must present ideas with enough power and clarity to cause the support to be sufficient.

Organization

- Must advance step by step through time.
- Must establish a sense of beginning, development, and ending.
- Must have evidence of a clear organizational strategy that is effective for the method of development chosen.

Coherence

- Connects sentences logically.
- Must establish relationship between and among the ideas, causes, and/or statements in the composition. Must be semantically and structurally sound.

Note 1: Coherence in a narrative composition is a quality that results from the effective use of organization, unity, reason, and logic.

Note 2: Examples of words and phrases that might be used to signal connections or transitions in a narrative composition are listed on page 5, Grade 4, ***Focused Holistic Sample Scoring Guide*** (1991-92).

Adapted from ***Grade 4 Focused Holistic Sample Scoring Guide***

HOLISTIC SCORING

Writing tests in North Carolina are scored using a focused holistic scoring method. Each paper is read by two independent readers, neither of whom knows how the other reader scored the paper. If each scores the paper at the same score point, say a 3, the student receives that score. If a discrepancy of just one score point occurs, say a 2 and a 3, the score points are averaged and the student receives a 2.5. If, however, a wider discrepancy occurs, a third reader judges the paper and reconciles the score.

A description of what factors make up each score point level is available in the Scoring Guide for fourth grade writing.

The following matrix explains the scoring criteria and rubrics for fourth grade narrative writing. Here are some suggestions for using this matrix in preparation for the writing test.

1. Teachers can use this matrix as a guide when scoring student preparation papers to give the sense of the score point levels to students.

2. Students, after instruction, can use this matrix to self-evaluate their papers. In all cases, they should be expected to score the paper, then write a statement of rationale for the score assigned to the paper.

3. Students may exchange papers on which names have been deleted and numbers or a code substituted. Staple a 3 x 5 index card to the top of each paper. The reader uses the matrix to assign a score to the paper and writes a statement of rationale for the score, both on the card. Then the reader folds the card over and staples it shut. A second reader scores the paper and writes the score and a statement of rationale on the outside of the folded card. The reader opens the card and averages the two scores and reads the rationales. Not only is this activity vauable learning for the reader, but also the writer has had two audiences.

4. Another way of using the matrix is to exchange papers with another class and follow the same procedure in #3 above. Names should always be obscured in some way when papers are exchanged, and the statement of rationale is essential for both the reader and the writer.

5. Much of what teachers learn when using the holistic score point guide transfers to the scoring for open-ended questions on the End-of-Grade tests. Those wishing to learn more and/or have practice in scoring holistically may inquire at the Testing Division of the N. C. Department of Public Instruction to score open-ended questions.

North Carolina Narrative Writing

Focused Holistic Scoring Guide

Score	Main Idea	Supporting Detail	Organization	Coherence
4 "strong command"	Clearly focuses on the prompt. Presents an effective sequence of events	Well-elaborated with specific, relevant details.	Clear, logical progression of ideas. Executes a controlled plan successfully.	Is unified and complete.
3 "reasonable command"	Clearly focuses on the prompt.	Elaborated with specific supporting details.	Logical progression of ideas and events. Has only minor lapses.	Generally coherent although some minor weakness may be present. Has a sense of overall completeness.
2 "weak command"	Focuses on the prompt.	Some elaboration and concrete supporting details, but may not be evenly elaborate. May be list-like.	Some progression of ideas and events.	Some evidence of coherence (explicit connections and transitions).
1 "lack of command"	Writer has attempted to respond to the prompt but does not sustain focus.	Attempts to support ideas, but too sparse to get higher score.	No sense of strategy or control or skeletal control.	Little evidence of coherence. May lack clarity or have an inappropriate strategy.
NS	Does not address prompt. Completely off topic. Merely restates prompt. Incoherent, illegible, or written in a foreign language.			
Score	Main Idea	Supporting Detail	Organization	Coherence

From Allen Teasley, Durham Public Schools

GRADE 4

Differences Between Personal and Imaginative Narrative Writing

> "The narrative tells a story or what happened. In the personal narrative, the student recounts events that he/she has experienced, read, or heard about. In the imaginative narrative, the student writes a story that revolves around an event and has a resolution."
>
> *from* ***Focused Holistic Scoring Guide****, 1992-93, p. 4*

Recent field trials in North Carolina have indicated that students do not perform as well on the imaginative writing as they do on personal narrative. However, both types of writing have many similarities in common: sequencing the events (beginning, middle, and end), descriptive details for setting, character, etc. Here are some ideas for strengthening students' imaginative writing:

1. Imaginative writing requires <u>invention</u> on the students' parts; that is, they have to think up the plot, setting, characters, etc. Personal writing requires <u>recall</u> of events which were actually experienced by the writer. Thus, students need practice in both kinds of writing. Since the personal seems the easier writing for students, it is imperative that they have practice in imaginative writing.

2. In assigning imaginative writing, stick to stereotypical settings such as fairy tales, animal stories, etc. Most children are very familiar with these settings and can imagine events happening in them.

3. If students will always make themselves one of the characters in the imaginative narrative, they can stay focused better than if they try to create or invent a completely new story.

4. Revision of imaginative narrative is harder for students than is revision of personal narrative because they do not begin with an actual, experienced event. Teachers need to be aware of this fact as they direct students in revising these narratives. Keep focus on the beginning, middle, and end and on story elements of plot, character, setting, etc.

5. Emphasis in both kinds of narrative must be on **SELECTIVITY** of detail. Students need much work and help in choosing details to put into the story, not using everything which comes to mind. Students must elaborate details which are important and which contribute to the flow of the story. The story does not have to begin at the beginning of the day, for example; however, the paper must indicate a strategy and must follow that strategy once established.

Student Preparation: Test Taking Strategies

- Engage students in writing test simulations prior to assessment day.
- Practice writing on paper like the test paper.
- Show students examples of "4" papers and other score points from the writing guide and your own classrooms. Have students suggest how the writer may have strengthened the writing to make it a better paper.
- Help students understand the writing criteria. See summary of criteria.
- Practice timed writing in class to learn to budget time for test:

  A. 5-10 minutes - plan (unlined paper)
  B. 20-25 minutes - draft
  C. 5-10 minutes - proof
  Students will want to compare their own time frames after test simulations. These times are only suggestions.

- After practice situations, develop with the students a list of strategies for managing time.
- List strategies for narrowing their focus, organizing their thoughts/ideas, and for getting started. These should be the same strategies they use as they write on a daily basis.
- Conference with students about their writing. Organize or provide sign up for "helping circle" where students can respond to each other's content.
- Use a "think aloud" and other teaching strategies to help students learn how to analyze the prompt and task.
- Help students understand assessment terminology.
- Plan some pieces as a class:
  A. List
  B. Brainstorm
  C. Web
  D. Organize
- Grade timed writing holistically using criteria in scoring guide, and give students a chance to revise their scored responses after studying examples of guide papers.
- Emphasize all year long the four convention categories of the analytical score. Copy on transparencies anonymous examples of student writing that contain convention errors. Ask students to identify errors. Use grammar texts as needed for mini-lessons on specific errors for the majority of the class. Return to transparencies and ask class to suggest alternatives for revisions of the convention errors.
- Hold individual student conferences to discuss positive and negative points. Comment positively on any success the student has shown in the writing while using questioning techniques to point out the deficiencies.

- Make transparencies of student work that model various problems in writing. As a whole group, have the class revise the paper. Once revised, rescore the paper to see how it has improved.
- Show students examples of 1, 2, 3 and 4 papers. Model for students what it takes to raise a 1 to a 4.
- Train students in peer editing and conferencing.
- Familiarize students with rubrics and encourage them to assess their own writing.
- Make an editing sheet for students that is grade-level appropriate.
- Train students in reading prompts so they can spot "trigger" words such as "story" or "describe like a picture."
- Teach students through modeled writing and writing samples the use of transition words.
- Reduce time spent with worksheets and replace them with original responses from students, perhaps in the form of open-ended questions.

Cautions

Below is a list of warnings to teachers as they prepare students for effective performance on the 4th grade writing test:

1. Narratives must have a beginning, middle, and end.
   - must be focused on a story that progresses and says something.
   - must move forward.
   - must stick to prompt and not wander or make aside statements.
   - must have action.
   - must not be a list of details.

2. Description will appear in narrative papers in several ways. It is necessary to establishing setting and in some ways to describing characters. However, some precautions must be taken.
   - must not overuse similes and metaphors; if so, the paper loses focus.
   - must focus on the visual; be able to draw a picture in the mind.
   - must not have aside statements.
   - must stick to the prompt.
   - should not say, "I am going to describe..."
   - should not say first, second, third in descriptive writing.
   - should use directional words when appropriate or a logical order or a chronological order.

3. **Formula writing is deadly to effectiveness of narrative writing. Avoid at all costs giving students formulas which you believe will guarantee successful performance on the test. Invariably, they penalize the students' performance.**

4. A special problem in narrative writing arises when students simply tell the events without discrimination as to the significance of the moment. (Example: omit the brushing of teeth unless that activity contributes significantly to the flow of the narrative.) Students must be taught **SELECTIVITY** in planning the writing. Help them decide prior to or during writing which events need to be included and which can be omitted.

5. Having students write on a different prompt each week does not insure high performance on the test. When students write on a prompt, certain conditions need to be met. Students must follow the writing process in preparation of these papers even though the process is not followed on the actual test. The most important component is teacher response to student writing; this is accomplished in several ways:
   - return student papers without grades.
   - show selected anonymous papers and have the class discuss ways in which the papers could be improved.
   - ask students in small groups to decide on a score appropriate to the quality of each anonymous paper assigned to them.
   - hold individual conferences with students about their papers. This will present some scheduling problems on the teacher's part, but the results are worth the effort.

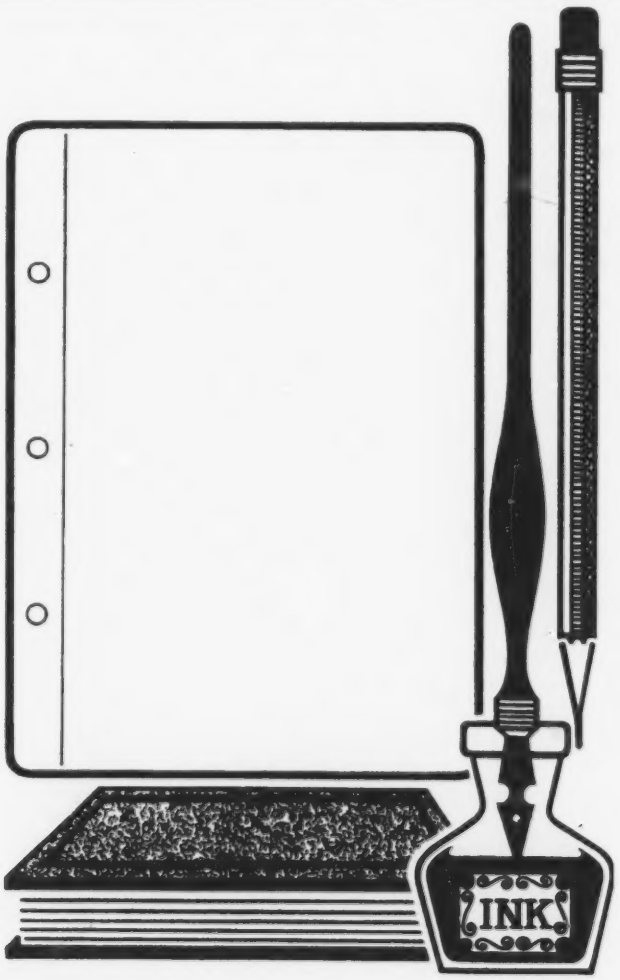
6. It is **NOT** necessary for students to write five paragraphs—or any other set number—to perform successfully on this test. In fact, forcing writing into a predetermined format diminishes student creativity.

7. It is completely permissible for students to use the first-person pronouns in all of these papers. One can write about one's own experiences only by using "I" or "we."

Sample Prompts

On the next few pages are sample prompts for narratives which will elicit personal and imaginative responses. They are included for simulations of the state test. They should be used sparingly. **Choosing a topic to write a story about is an important decision for children. They must be given choices in their everyday writing. Students write more carefully about topics they know and care about.**

Formula writing is deadly to effectiveness of narrative writing. Avoid at all costs giving students formulas which, you believe, will guarantee successful performance on the test. Invariably, they penalize the students' performance.



PERSONAL NARRATIVE

Sample Prompts

Think about a time when you needed help or helped somebody. It could have been a friend, a family member, a neighbor, or someone you didn't know. Write a paper about one time when you helped someone or when someone helped you.

As you write your paper, remember to:

- Tell about one time you helped someone or you needed help.
- Tell about the events before, during, and after the incident.

Think about a time when you received a gift or gave a gift to somebody. It could have been a friend, a family member, or a neighbor. Write a story about one time when you gave someone a gift or when someone gave you a gift.

As you write your paper, remember to:

- Tell about one time you gave or received a gift.
- Tell about the events before, during, and after the incident.

Think about a trip you've taken. It could have been a field trip, a family vacation, or an out-of-town visit. Write a paper telling about this trip.

As you write your paper, remember to:

- Tell about one trip you have taken.
- Tell about the events in the beginning, middle, and end of the trip.

Think about a time when you did something really special with your mom or dad or with another adult. Write a story telling about this event.

As you write your paper, remember to:

- Tell about one particular experience.
- Tell about the events before, during, and after the experience.

Think about a time when someone else got you in trouble. It could have happened at home, at school, or somewhere else. The person might have gotten you in trouble on purpose or accidentally. Write a story telling about this event.

As you write your paper, remember to:

- Tell about one time when someone got you in trouble.
- Tell about the events before, during, and after the incident.

Think about a time you went on a field trip with your class to a museum, farm, factory, or historic site. Write a story telling about your trip.

As you write your paper, remember to:

- Tell about one field trip.
- Tell about the events in the beginning, middle, and end of the trip.

Think about a time when you and a friend had a conflict. Think about what caused the conflict and how you solved the problem. Write a paper telling about this conflict.

As you write your paper, remember to:

- Tell about one particular conflict with a friend.
- Tell about the events before, during, and after the conflict.

IMAGINATIVE NARRATIVE

Sample Prompts

> Imagine a box. It might be large or small. Write about what's inside the box. It can be real or make-believe. Tell a story about the box and what's inside it.

As you write your paper, remember to:

- Write a story about the box and about what is inside the box.
- Be sure that your story has a beginning, a middle, and an end.

> Imagine that you are asked to take a ride on a magic flying carpet. Tell a story about your experience on this journey.

As you write your paper, remember to:

- Write a story about your adventure on the flying carpet.
- Be sure that your story has a beginning, a middle, and an end.

> Imagine that a spaceship has landed in the school's playground. Write a story about what happens when the door of the spaceship opens.

As you write your paper, remember to:

- Write a story about the landing of the spaceship at the school.
- Be sure that your story has a beginning, a middle, and an end.

Imagine that while walking along the beach one day you notice a bottle. Inside the bottle is a message. Write a story about what happens after you read the message.

As you write your paper, remember to:

- Write a story about the message in the bottle.
- Be sure that your story has a beginning, a middle, and an end.

While walking down the street one day, you see a strange animal. This animal might be large or small. It may be a familiar animal or one you've never seen before. Tell a story about what happens when you meet this animal.

As you write your paper, remember to:

- Write a story about your adventure with this animal.
- Be sure that your story has a beginning, a middle, and an end.

Imagine that one Saturday morning you wake up and your favorite cartoon character is sitting on the edge of your bed. This character invites you to spend a day having an adventure. Write a story about what the two of you do during the day.

As you write your paper, remember to:

- Write a story about your adventure with this character.
- Be sure that your story has a beginning, a middle, and an end.

Imagine that you have been left home alone during a bad snowstorm. You're in charge of the home. Write a story telling what happens during the storm.

As you write your paper, remember to:

- Write a story about your experience during the storm.
- Be sure that your story has a beginning, a middle, and an end.

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A Sample Letter to Parents

Note: The school principal or class teacher may care to send out this letter and it suggestions. It will probably need to be modified to suit local conditions and the age of the children. No acknowledgement need be made. (Author Unknown)

Dear Parent,

Your child's writing is a top priority with us.

This letter invites you to cooperate with the school in developing the best possible *attitude* to that writing.

Writing is extremely important in learning. Your child will be doing some writing on every school day throughout the primary and secondary years - recording key ideas, stating opinions, communicating thoughts to others...I am referring not to handwriting but to what used to be called "composition," *the ability to express ideas clearly on paper*, an ability that makes a child confident in handling classwork day by day.

Do you know that all advanced countries are giving writing a higher priority in the 1990's than ever before? There are good reasons why. Not only is writing needed for success in modern school learning, but it will be needed more and more in career and job-retraining courses at colleges or universities. Certainly it is needed increasingly by people who want to rise in careers - think of all the applications, memos and reports that must be written. It is needed to cope with today's many problems, to write a consumer complaint, an accident report, an objection to a local government measure, or whatever else.

So you see why your child will gain from a good *attitude* toward writing. But how can we adults - parents and teachers - foster that attitude? Neither advice nor nagging will succeed.

There's an old saying, "Children never listen to what adults *tell* them, but they copy what adults *do*." We teachers will be doing some writing with the children. Will you do some with your child? Here is a suggested home policy on writing:

- Let your child see you writing.
- Talk about the writing you are doing or intend to do.
- Ask your child to add to letters you write to relatives.
- As part of your interest in school, ask about current writing.
- Provide a quiet place to write, away from the noise of TV.
- Have good children's books in the home (borrowed from the library or bought): good readers tend to become good writers.
- Firmly control TV-viewing, so that the set is not on *all* the time, but only for selected shows. Then there is time for 'the other things in life', including reading and writing.

I'm sure we can together create this good *attitude* to writing and that it will indeed benefit your child's future.

Yours sincerely,

Appendix:

Children's Books

The books listed in this appendix should be reviewed carefully by the teacher prior to using them in the classroom. They represent a range of reading levels and maturity levels.

MEMOIRS

A Grain of Wheat by Clyde Robert Bulla
A Girl from Yamhill by Beverly Cleary
Boy by Roald Dahl
Homesick: My Own Story by Jean Fritz
Child Times: A Three Generation Memoir by Eloise Greenfield and Lessie Jones Little
Little by Little by Jean Little
Starting from Home: A Writer's Beginning by Milton Meltzer
How I Came to Be a Writer by Phyllis R. Naylor
But I'll Be Back Again: An Album by Cynthia Rylant
My Diary—My World by Elizabeth Yates

BOOKS WRITTEN LIKE PERSONAL NARRATIVES

Little Nino's Pizzeria by K. Barbour
The Best Town in the World by Byrd Baylor
Our Cat Flossie by R. Brown
Today was a Terrible Day by Patricia Riley Giff
Best Friends by S. Kellogg
The Ghost-Eye Tree by Bill Martin, Jr. and John Archambault
There's a Nightmare in My Closet by Mercer Mayer
Tar Beach by Faith Ringold
The Relatives Came by Cynthia Rylant
The Tenth Good Thing About Barney by Judith Viorst
Ira Says Goodbye by B. Waber
A Chair for My Mother by Vera B. Williams
Owl Moon by Jane Yolen

STORIES ILLUSTRATING BEGINNING-MIDDLE-END

The Ugly Duckling by Hans Christian Anderson
Millions of Cats by Wanda Gag
Sixteen Short Stories by Outstanding Writers for Young Adults by D. R. Gallo, (Ed.)
Little Red Riding Hood by T. S. Hyman
The Island of the Skog by S. Kellogg

The Pied Piper of Hamelin by Mercer Mayer
The Tale of Peter Rabbit by Beatrice Potter
Rapunzel by B. Rogasky
The Treasure by U. Schulevitz
Where the Wild Things Are by Maurice Sendak
Jumanji by Chris Van Allsburg
Hey, Al by Arthur Yorinks
Duffy and the Devil by H. Zemach and M. Zemach

Beginnings
Louis the Fish by Arthur Yorinks
Granpa by John Burningham
The Relatives Came by Cynthia Rylant
Fireflies by Julie Brinckloe
James and the Giant Peach by Roald Dahl
But I'll Be Back Again by Cynthia Rylant
The Bat Poet by Randall Jarrell
The Iron Man by Ted Hughes
Shreck! by William Steig
Tar Beach by Faith Ringold

Endings
Surprise Endings
Just Like Daddy by Frank Asch
The Wednesday Surprise by Eve Bunting
Just Like Everyone Else by Karla Kuskin
Flossie and the Fox by Patricia C. McKissack
In the Attic by Hiawyn Oram
Super Dooper Jezebel by Tony Ross
The Frog Prince by John Scieszka
Earthlets by Jeanne Willis

Circular Endings
Very Last First Time by Jan Andrews
Grandfather Twilight by Barbara Berger
"Poem" by Langston Hughes in *Best Friends*
If You Give a Mouse a Cookie by Laura J. Numeroff
A Winter Place by Ruth Yaffe Radin
The Relatives Came by Cynthia Rylant
Two Bad Ants by Chris Van Allsburg
Louis the Fish by Arthur Yorinks
Bob and Shirley by Harriet Ziefert

Poignant Endings
The Children We Remember by Chana Byers Abells
The Two of Them by Aliki
Gorilla by Anthony Browne
Dear Daddy by Phyllipe Dupasquier
Wilfred Gordon McDonald Partridge by Mem Fox
The Ring and the Window Seat by Amy Hest
The Year of the Perfect Christmas Tree by Barbara Houston
The Keeping Quilt by Patricia Polacco
Faithful Elephants by Yukio Tsuchiya
A Father Like That by Charlotte Zolotow
William's Doll by Charlotte Zolotow
Bridge to Terabithia by Katherine Paterson
"Slower than the Rest," short story in *Every Living Thing* by Cynthia Rylant

BOOKS WITH STRONG CHARACTERS
The Two of Them by Aliki
The Song and Dance Man by Karen Ackerman
Granpa by John Burningham
My Mother's House, My Father's House by C. B. Christiansen
Molly's Pilgrim by Barbara Cohen
Miss Rumphius by Barbara Cooney
An Enchanted Hair Tale by Alex De Veaux
Diana, Maybe by Crescent Dragonwagon
How Does It Feel to be Old? by Norma Farber
Rosalie by Jean Hewett
Tales of a Gambling Grandma by Dayal Kaur Khalsa
Through Grandpa's Eyes by Patricia MacLachlan
Super Dooper Jezebel by Tony Ross
Crow Boy by Taro Yashima
Hey Al and *Louis the Fish* by Arthur Yorinks
I Know a Lady by Charlotte Zolotow
The Stories Julian Tells and *More Stories Julian Tells* by Ann Cameron
The Ramona books by Beverly Cleary
Charlie and the Chocolate Factory and *Matilda* by Roald Dahl
Bunnicula by Deborah and James Howe
Autumn Street by Lois Lowry
Goodnight, Mr. Tom by Michelle Margorian
The Great Gilly Hopkins and *Bridge to Terabithia* by Katherine Paterson

VOICE
Picture Books
The Pain and the the Great One by Judy Blume
Goodbye Geese by Nancy Carlstrom

On the Day You Were Born by Debra Frasier
Tight Times by Barbara Shook Hazen
I Am the Ocean by Suzanna Marshak
White Dynamite and the Curly Kid and *Knots on a Counting Rope* by Bill Martin, Jr. and John Archambault
The Relatives Came and *When I Was Young in the Mountains* by Cynthia Rylant
The True Story of The Three Little Pigs by John Scieszka
Gila Monsters Meet You at the Airport by Marjorie Sharmat
Stevie and My Special Best Words by John Steptoe

Nonfiction
A Medieval Feast by Aliki
Where the Forest Meets the Sea by Jeannie Baker
The Way to Start the Day by Byrd Baylor
A River Ran Wild and *The Great Kapok Tree* by Lynne Cherry
The Magic School Bus series by Joanna Cole
The Popcorn Book by Tomie de Paola
Arctic Memories by Normee Ekoomiak
Time Train by Paul Fleischman
Books by Jean Fritz about the American Revolution
All Upon a Sidewalk by Jean Craighead George
Box Turtle by William T. George
A Little Schubert by M. B. Goffstein
Ox-Cart Man by Donald Hall
The Comet and You by E. C. Krupp
A Prairie Boy's Winter by William Kurelek
The Microscope by Maxine Kumin
The Philharmonica Gets Dressed and *The Dallas Titans Get Ready For Bed* by Karla Kuskin
Chipmunk Song by Joanne Ryder
How Much Is A Million? by David M. Schwartz
Nettie's Trip South by Ann Turner

BOOKS WITH A DISTINCT SENSE OF PLACE
Picture Books
Very Last First Time by Jan Andrews
Where the Forest Meets the Sea by Jeannie Baker
Your Own Secret Place, The Desert Is Theirs and *The Best Town in the World* by Byrd Baylor
The Tunnel by Anthony Browne
The Great Kapok Tree by Lynne Cherry
Miss Rumphius by Barbara Cooney
Artic Memories by Normee Ekoomiak
Snow White in New York by Fiona French
Box Turtle at Long Pond by William T. George

Up North in Winter by Deborah Hartley
In Coal Country by Judith Hendershot
The Year of the Perfect Christmas Tree by Gloria Houston
Yonder by Tony Johnston
Night Ridge by Bernie and Mati Karlin
The Beach Before Breakfast by Maxine W. Kumin
My Little Island by Fran Lessac
Where the River Begins by Thomas Locker
I Am the Ocean by Suzanna Marshak
In the Attic by Hiawyn Oram
Woodpile by Peter Parnall
The Chalk Doll by Charlotte Pomerantz
Once There Was a Tree by N. Romanova
Inside Turtle's Shell by Joanne Ryder
All I See, When I Was Young in the Mountains, Appalachia, and *Night in the Country* by Cynthia Rylant
Sierra by Diane Siebert
No Star Nights by Anna Egan Smucker
Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters by John Steptoe
Dakota Dugout by Ann Turner
Three Days on a River in a Red Canoe by Vera B. Williams
Owl Moon by Jane Yolen
Sarah, Plain and Tall by Patricia MacLachlan

TIME
These books contain a vivid or unusual use of time.
Picture Books
The Two of Them by Aliki
Granpa by John Burningham
I'm in Charge of Celebrations by Byrd Baylor
In Coal Country by Judith Hendershot
Rosalie by Joan Hewett
When I Was Young in the Mountains by Cynthia Rylant
When I was Nine by James Stevenson
Home Place by Crescent Dragonwagon
Time Train by Paul Fleischman
Ring and the Window Seat by Amy Hest
The Beach Before Breakfast by Maxine W. Kumin
The Stopwatch by David Lloyd
Karin's Christmas Walk by Susan Pearson
Night in the Country by Cynthia Rylant

Stevie by John Steptoe
Just a Dream by Chris Van Allsburg
A Chair for My Mother by Vera B. Williams

Sources: Fletcher, Ralph. (1993). ***What a Writer Needs.*** Portsmouth, NH. Heinemann.
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